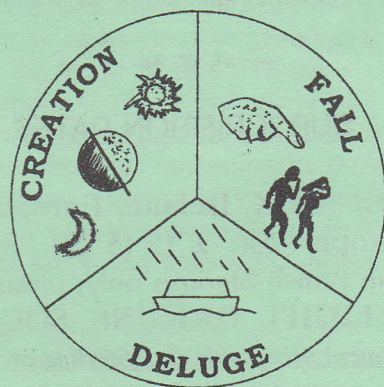


And God saw that it was good...

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EDITORIAL

Great Scientists - Great Creationists! Contrary to popular modern myth, the foundations of modern science were laid by **Christians** who accepted the Bible as the Word of God, and had no need for an evolutionary hypothesis. One such was **Louis Pasteur**, who worked for the acceptance of the germ theory in aseptic surgery, and the development of immunisation against anthrax and rabies. Atheist **Isaac Asimov** devotes one of his longest entries to Pasteur, but imputes him with religious prejudice:

"Pasteur was a very religious man and there was a certain religious value in disproving the doctrine of spontaneous generation, for it left the matter of creation of life in the hands of God...(Pasteur's religious feelings also led him to reject Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection.)" [*Biographical Encyclopedia of Science and Technology*, 1971, p. 371].

We can be certain that Pasteur's opposition to Darwinism was based on his fine intellect, objectivity and realism - not on his emotions!

A brief biography of Pasteur appears in this issue, thanks to my third son **Francis** (13) submitting his biology homework! Which gave me an idea...

Young Writers Competition! Entries are invited from **school students** to continue the series, "*Brief Lives of Catholic Scientists*". All entries, and all selected work, will be awarded **prizes**. Reference sources may be available from me on request. Preferred length - about **800 - 1600 words**. Entries acceptable on 3½" disk from IBM-compatible computer, ASCII or WordPerfect Text Files.

❧ God bless you all! ❧

A.N.

BRIEF LIVES OF CATHOLIC SCIENTISTS

Louis Pasteur

by

Francis Nevard

Louis Pasteur was born in 1822 , at Dôle, not far from the border between France and Switzerland. His parents were peasants and his father was a tanner by trade. Louis went to school in Arbois but he did badly as he preferred to go fishing. His headmaster realized that although he was slow he had a good brain. When he was 15, at the encouragement of his headmaster, he went to school in Paris. Once there he got homesick and in the end his father had to bring him home again. After studying for a while at Besançon, he went back to Paris and entered the École Normale. He worked hard but even so he was only considered mediocre at chemistry.

At 26 he discovered that tartaric acid produces a strange effect when light passes through it because it is made up of lots of different kinds of acids. In 1854 he became Professor of Chemistry and Dean of Sciences at the University of Lille, and devoted his studies to the problems of local industries, namely the problem of why beer and wine go bad.

In 1857 he announced his germ theory of fermentation. At the time the theory was that fermentation was a chemical decomposition process which did not require any organisms. There was also a theory of spontaneous generation, which said that organisms come from rotting food. An example of this is that rotting grain produces rats. This was believed in the 17th century because wherever there was rotting grain, rats were also found.

Although Pasteur had very little proof for his theory, he made some suggestions which helped the industries of brewing, wine and vinegar. Pasteur looked at some bad beer under the microscope and found that it had little rod shaped bacteria in, instead of the round yeast cells to be found in good beer. He helped the brewers to cultivate the right organisms and also showed the wine industry that heating the wine for a short time at 60°C would kill off harmful bacteria and made the wine able to be stored longer.

Pasteur then proved that bacteria are present in the air. He set up an

experiment to prove this. First he filled some flasks with a nutrient broth and then drew out the neck into fine curves using a Bunsen burner. Then he heated the flasks so any bacteria already present were killed. Then he left the flasks for a few months. After this he examined them and found that they were unchanged and there were no microbes present. Then he showed that if he broke off the neck, or let the broth come into contact with the dust trapped in the curves, bacteria would appear in the broth within another few days.

Pasteur must have thought something like this. Bacteria are small and light but not as light as air. If air were to be sucked slowly through a thin tube bent into a series of curves, any bacteria or dust in the air would settle in the curves. This would leave pure air coming out of the other end. This is what happened in Pasteur's flasks. When the hot air cooled inside the flasks, air was drawn in from the outside. All the bacteria and dust collected in the curves and so the air entering the flasks was pure.

In 1865 he was asked to investigate an illness in silkworms. He was not interested in the problem originally, but after seeing the misery of the silk growers he decided to take the problem up. He looked at the diseased worms under the microscope and found that they all had bacteria in them. He then got some silkworms and fed some of them on clean mulberry leaves and others on mulberry leaves smeared with the diseased sections of dead silkworms. The silkworms fed on the leaves smeared with silkworms caught the disease whereas the other silkworms stayed healthy. Pasteur advised the silkgrowers to keep the diseased silkworms away from the healthy ones. This effectively saved the silk industry of France, as well as introducing the idea that bacteria caused disease.

As well as being a scientist, Louis Pasteur was also a devout Catholic. There is a story that once, when Pasteur was saying the Rosary on a train, a man sitting opposite him remarked that science could explain everything and there was no need to believe in God anymore. He did not know that he was talking to one of the leading men of science in the world.

Pasteur died in 1895, at the age of 73. Asimov says in his *Biographical Encyclopedia* - "Pasteur died at the height of his glory, recognized both in his lifetime and ever since as one of the greatest scientists in history. In biology it is doubtful that anyone but Aristotle and Darwin can be mentioned in the same breath with him."



DEADLY FRUIT OF EVOLUTIONISM

by Anthony Nevard

Creation and Evolution - complementary or contradictory?

Catholics who believe that Evolution can be reconciled with Christian doctrines invariably assume that the modern world view of educated unbiased people is based on the incontrovertible data of scientific research. Correctly arguing that the Faith and true Facts cannot be in opposition, they must then modify those aspects of theology which are logically contradictory to the current scientific orthodoxy, starting with the Genesis account of Creation. But the theory of evolution poses a real problem - as a scientific explanation of origins, it can only allow natural causes from the material world, not supernatural acts of creation. Modern science claims to explain the entire cosmos, even its ultimate origin, entirely from the operation of chance and natural selection working with the laws of nature. The attempt to synthesise supernatural with natural causation by the expression "creation by evolution" is mere sophistry, and confuses the issue. ¹

Any catechism or basic theology text will show that Divine Creation means the direct action of God as **primary cause**, willing something into being, causing it to exist, ex nihilo - out of nothing. This must be an instantaneous, timeless, immeasurable act - there can be no half way stage - as also in the case of a miracle. Nor can it be subjected to any physical experimentation, or described by chemistry or physics. Creation by God cannot mean a change within nature, which works with already existing matter, or like a human act of creation, such as a potter with clay. Evolutionary change involves altering existing beings through **secondary causes**, not by God's direct intervention as 'Creator'. If it were possible, God could have created a world in which natural processes caused the slow development of different material beings, one from another, but this could not be the meaning of Creation in the theological sense always understood in Genesis and in the Christian Creeds. ²

Evolution provides a story of our origins, a creation myth, supposedly based on science, without the need for a personal Creator. Hence, without a God, Evolutionism can reject moral and social principles based on the absolute authority of the commandments of the Supreme Being, and replace them with merely human standards. Claiming to explain our past and predict our future, Evolution has really become a religion in itself, and is widely perceived as opposed to the doctrines of Christianity. Many moral and social evils of

modern times have thrived through its influence, and it has even been recognised as harming Science on which it depends for credibility.

Evolution damaging to Science

Anthropologist **Dr. Loren Eiseley** wrote :

"After having chided the theologian for his reliance on myth and miracle, science found itself in the unenviable position of having to create a mythology of its own: namely, the assumption that what, after long effort, could not be proved to take place today had, in truth, taken place in the primeval past." ³

Or, as **Prof. Louis Bounoure** put it more succinctly:

"Evolutionism is a fairy tale for grown-ups. This theory has helped nothing in the progress of science. It is useless." ⁴

Blunt, indeed, but rather mild and generous compared with the remarks of **Dr. John Durant**, who in 1980 told the British Association for the Advancement of Science that the secular myths of evolution have had - "a damaging effect on scientific research", leading to "distortion, to needless controversy, and to the gross misuse of science." ⁵ In other words, worse than useless!

In passing, it may be noted how much time, energy and money is being spent by scientists now in various quests, such as supposedly to recreate the conditions at the 'Big Bang'. They try to detect messages from outer space - surely fruitless for communication if they be found to come from places claimed to be millions of light years away! They want to send multimillion-dollar spacecraft to the planet Mars to search for dead bacteria they believe might be hiding somewhere on its barren surface. How is this huge expenditure justified, when there are so many more pressing needs on Earth? One answer is that those in control of these projects are desperately seeking real evidence to convince us that evolution really happened, and that the Bible and the Catholic Church are wrong about God, Creation and Man.

Harmful effects on Society

After "The Origin of Species" was published in 1859, Social Darwinism quickly developed in England, and later in America, to justify the monopolistic practices of industrialists, their exploitation of labour, and "laissez-faire" capitalism in general. Having been used by Darwin to explain biological evolution, the ideas of "the struggle for existence", a term borrowed from Malthus's essay on Population, "natural selection," and "survival of the fittest" became slogans to apply to business, industrial and political life, and

considered justified methods of progress. **John D. Rockefeller**, oil magnate, said "This is not an evil tendency in business. It is merely the working out of a law of nature and a law of God." ⁶ **Andrew Carnegie** wrote of the "law of competition", by which - "Not only had I got rid of theology and the supernatural but I had found the truth of evolution." ⁷ **William Sumner**, Professor of political and social science at Yale between 1872 and 1909, "influenced vast numbers of students with his doctrines that the principles of social evolution negated the traditional American ideology of equality and natural rights." ⁸ This ideology, of course, had been founded on Christianity.

Darwin's book was subtitled "The Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life," and with the backing of Thomas Huxley, evolutionism gave racism scientific plausibility and respectability. Negroes were viewed by scientists as a lower sub-species, irredeemably inferior to Caucasians. Indoctrination in these ideas led to institutionalised racism in Germany in the 1930's and apartheid in South Africa. It was also the cause of the rejection of belief in the origin of humanity being a single pair (monogenism) for belief in many separate origins (polygenism).

Evolutionism was not only applied to races but to social classes. **Marx** and **Engels** wrote of "The part played by Labour in the transition from ape to man," and their ideas of the Class Struggle were worked out through Marxist dialectical materialism. When Communist troops overran China in 1940, **Bishop Cuthbert O'Gara** reports that the propaganda corps rapidly followed, with a week of seminars indoctrinating everyone in Communism. But initially to his amazement, the very first lesson was, not the economic principles of Marx, but man's descent from the ape. He realised later in jail that this was because the primary purpose of the Peking Government was to destroy all religious belief. "Darwinism negates God, the Human soul and the after life, and leaves a vacuum to be filled with Communism." ⁹

Effects on Morality

If "natural selection" is a good and necessary force in the biological world, and artificial selection to improve domesticated plants and animals is morally acceptable, then if humans are merely evolved animals it is reasonable to apply selection to humans, in other words controlling who are allowed to survive and reproduce. Thus developed the science of Eugenics, the flavour of which can be experienced from a short quotation from **Major Leonard Darwin's** book in a chapter entitled: 'The Men we Want' :

"We can at all events assert that there are many kinds of men that we do not want. These include the criminal, the insane, the imbecile, the

feeble in mind, the diseased at birth, the deformed, the deaf, the blind, etc., etc. How to lessen their numbers will be considered in later chapters." ¹⁰

These chilling conclusions follow from his premise that man is cousin to the lower animals, as seen from fossil remains and vestigial aquatic features in the embryo, "relics indicating the kind of life lived by our remote ancestors." He recognises that "the strongest opposition to this belief in the lowly ancestry of man is based on religious scruples," and argues that :

"Each one of us developed before birth into something shaped like an animal which could not be distinguished from a pig or a sheep when at the same early stage of development. After birth we were for a time far more helpless and far less intelligent than a monkey." ¹¹

The term "not fully human" comes to mind, although the evidences Leonard Darwin used in support of this idea are now scientifically disproven. Yet such views have been enthusiastically used by the birth controllers and population planners to foster the contraceptive mentality, abortion on demand, sterilization programmes and by extension the euthanasia movement. ¹² Evil fruits indeed - but who has recognised the need to attack the evolutionary tree from which they continue to grow?

While none would claim that the modern ubiquitous emphasis on evolution is the root of all evils, there is undoubtably a significant connection with greatly increased crime rates and falling moral standards, as the proscriptive authority of the Bible and the Church have been increasingly denied. Practices such as adultery, divorce, pre-marital sex, homosexuality, prostitution and pornography, once widely considered wrong, publically shameful and often illegal, are condoned or even accorded "rights", as free 'lifestyle choices' for the individual, and personal private matters. In fact, they are sins against Divine commandments relating to family life and relationships, and society at large. Other commandments of God are also ignored, with widespread disrespect for others' rights, cheating, lying, slander, blasphemy, stealing, violence, drunkenness, even murder - if the individual can benefit and get away with it, why not? Philosopher **Will Durant** wrote in 1980:

"By offering evolution in place of God as a cause of history, Darwin removed the theological basis of the moral code of Christendom. And the moral code that has no fear of God is very shaky. That's the condition we are in ... I don't think man is capable yet of managing social order and individual decency without fear of some supernatural being overlooking him and able to punish him." ¹³

Effects on Christianity

Many Christians today try to accept the science of evolution but maintain belief in creation by God through interpreting Genesis allegorically. They may attempt to retain some notion of Original Sin, and reject the immoral implications previously described. These 'theistic evolutionists' may claim that atheistic scientists have failed to recognise the Supernatural Cause of the process, and even argue that Evolution really expresses the Christian doctrine much better than the simple traditional belief in Special Creation. This latter-day 'gnosticism' seems more likely to provoke scorn than respect, as witness the following responses to it:

Nobel laureate **Jacques Monod**, interviewed in 1976, said:

"And why would God have to have chosen this extremely complex and difficult mechanism? When, I would say by definition, He was at liberty to choose other mechanisms, why would He have to start with simple molecules? Why not create man right away, as of course classical religions believed? ... [natural] selection is the blindest, and most cruel way of evolving new species ... The struggle for life and elimination of the weakest is a horrible process, against which our whole modern ethics revolts ... I am surprised that a Christian would defend the idea that this is the process which God more or less set up in order to have evolution." ¹⁴

Philosopher **Bertrand Russell**, in 1961, put it thus:

"Religion, in our day, has accommodated itself to the doctrine of evolution ... we are told that ... evolution is the unfolding of an idea which has been in the mind of God throughout. It appears that during those ages ... when animals were torturing each other with ferocious horns and agonizing stings, Omnipotence was quietly waiting for the ultimate emergence of man, with his still more widely diffused cruelty. Why the Creator should have preferred to reach his goal by a process, instead of going straight to it, these modern theologians do not tell us." ¹⁵

Atheistic Scientists are not even prepared to allow a supernatural origin of the soul, as they have already denied its very existence. **Francis Crick**, Nobel laureate, co-discoverer of the structure of DNA in 1950, in a recent book argues that science has shown that human personality can be entirely understood through the behaviour of nerve cells and molecules. It is revealing that he introduces his book with a definition of the soul - source, our Catholic penny catechism ! He points out that this belief was plausible when people thought that the earth was the centre of the universe, and relatively young - less than 10,000 years old -but: "we now know its true age is about 4.6 billion years." So now the cards are on the table - replace geocentrism with

heliocentrism, and recent creation with billions of years, and we lose our souls. Modern science, he says, has made spectacular advances that have given us a very different picture of the world today. True, but he goes on to infer that, until Darwin's theory of natural selection,

"The argument from design appeared to be unanswerable ... yet this argument has collapsed completely. We know that all living things... are related .. and have changed over billions of years... We can watch the basic process of evolution happening today, both in the field and in our test tubes." 16

Of course, he is referring here to micro-evolution within species, which no-one is questioning. Macro-evolution between basic kinds is what is claimed, and everyone agrees that this has never been observed to happen at all!

The materialistic neuroscientist sees no need for the soul concept. There is no personal life before conception or after death. Crick even suggests an evolutionary explanation for religious beliefs and a scientific explanation of free will, and expects that future research will explain other human mental activities as well. Science is all you need to explain the world - God has become redundant.

Australian **Professor Hiram Caton** wrote in 1987 these telling words: "The long evolutionary past removes the Judeo-Christian God to an infinite distance and finally extinguishes Him in the belief that our species is the chance product of blind natural forces. We are on our own and consequently we may do what we will, free of ancient prohibitions and divinely sanctioned codes." 17

And long, long ago, a serpent said to a woman: "No, you shall not die the death... Your eyes shall be opened: and you shall be as Gods, knowing good and evil." *Gen. 3:4,5*

Humanists are particularly forceful in rejecting a coalition between evolution and religion. The American "**Humanist Manifesto II**" (1973) begins:

"As non-theists, we begin with humans, not God, nature, not duty... But we can discover no divine purpose or providence for the human species.

While there is much that we do not know, humans are responsible for what we are or will become. No deity will save us; we must save ourselves." Its second tenet includes the following: "Promises of immortal salvation or eternal damnation are both illusory and harmful ... Rather science affirms that the human species is an emergence from natural evolutionary forces.

As far as we know, the total personality is a function of the biological organisms transacting in a social and cultural context. There is no credible

evidence that life survives the death of the body." 18

We should be aware of the fact that over 260 people signed this Humanist Manifesto, all of them holding influential positions in education, government, industry or religion. These include key people in control of schools, publishing of books and programming the media, and their influence is world-wide.

We might wish to compromise with evolutionists, but they do not! The editor of *American Atheist*, 1988, wrote:

"When the theory of evolution was advanced, that was the date that the Judeo-Christian religion began the decline in which it now finds itself in the West. The two theories are point-blank in contradiction one to the other. Any scientists, any educators, any religious persons who state to you that there is no conflict simply want to hang on to both worlds because they have not been able to divest themselves of the infantile belief system which was programmed into them when they were children. They want a foot in each camp. Religion is their emotional security blanket. Science is facing a world of reality which - in the final analysis - they cannot face. They are too cowardly to see religion should be abandoned so they stand there one foot in and one foot out." 19

G. Richard Bozarth, in an article "The Meaning of Evolution" wrote:

"Christianity has fought, still fights, and will fight science to the desperate end over evolution, because evolution destroys utterly and finally the very reason Jesus' earthly life was supposedly necessary ... If Jesus was not the redeemer who died for our sins, and this is what evolution means, then Christianity is nothing!

"What all this means is that Christianity cannot lose the Genesis account of creation like it could lose the doctrine of geocentrism and get along. The battle must be waged, for Christianity is fighting for its very life." 20

Pope Pius XII warned us in 1950

He wrote of the "deadly fruit" of novel theological opinions arising from Evolution, in his encyclical *Humani Generis*, which begins:

"Disagreement and error among men on moral and religious matters have always been a cause of profound sorrow to all good men, but above all to the true and loyal sons of the Church, especially today, when we see the principles of Christian culture being attacked on all sides." 21

He is not surprised at discord and error outside the Church, and points out that the human intellect is hampered in knowing divine truths -

"by the activity of the senses and the imagination, and by evil passions

arising from original sin. Hence men easily persuade themselves in such matters that what they do not wish to believe is false or at least doubtful."²²

If systems of belief based on evolution are thus in error, they must be resisted - this obviously includes the pantheistic New Age Movement, heavily indebted to the writings of Fr. Teilhard de Chardin, which atheist scientist Sir Peter Medawar honoured with the epithet "pious bunk". Catholics who have ignored Papal warnings may personally believe they have no problem with Evolution, but the implications described above prove that this is not merely a matter of private opinion. Should not these evolutionists be concerned about the effects of the issue on others, and seriously consider the consistency of their position in relation to the Church's constant teachings?

While other issues such as abortion, crime, divorce, education, catechetics, the liturgy - may seem much more important to Catholics on a practical level than Evolution, are they aware of the wide-ranging and deep influences it has had on society, morality and religion? While many laudably attack the evil fruits, they so often fail to appreciate the significant extent to which the fruits are fed from the evolutionary tree, and hence the need to support the attack on its roots if long-term progress is to be made in fighting these evils.

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*In the spirit of Pope Pius XII's Humani Generis, a
new foundation challenges evolutionist dogma*

Rock of Ages

By STEVEN TERENCE

In the 1960 film "Inherit the Wind", a movie based on the famous Scopes Monkey Trial of 1925, Frederic March plays the part of prosecuting lawyer Matthew Harrison Brady, a character based on populist and religious fundamentalist William Jennings Bryan. Near the end of the movie, Brady agrees to take the witness stand and, when the Clarence Darrow-like defense attorney played by Spencer Tracy produces a rock as an exhibit, is asked whether he knows how old it is. Brady declares: "I'm more interested in the Rock of Ages than the age of rocks."

While the delivery of such lines won March an Oscar, it was one of the few personable moments the Brady character was permitted. For though John Scopes, the teacher and defendant at the trial, was found guilty of breaking the Tennessee law forbidding the teaching of evolution in the public schools, the case was certainly a public relations coup for evolutionists, and a black eye for creationism. Since that time, anyone expressing doubt about the theory of evolution, or affirming creationism, risks charges of obscurantism and scientific illiteracy from the academic elite.

Yet, according to one authority on the subject, the dogmas of evolutionism need to be seriously questioned.

"I wish we could have a repeat of the Scopes trial today," says Fr. David Becker, "because the real telling evidence was the Nebraska Man - that single tooth that turned out to be not a man's but a pig's tooth."

If a new trial were to open, Fr. Becker, a graduate of Penn State University and the Gregorian in Rome, could certainly be called as a witness for the prosecution. He is the founder of Morning Star Catholic Origins Society, a remarkable new organisation dedicated to communicating the scientific basis for the creationist position and the lack of scientific foundation for evolutionism. Father Becker calls the two-year-old society his "third job," working at it during whatever spare time he can manage around his duties as a pastor and prison chaplain in Pennsylvania. Yet he does find enough time to publish *Watchmaker*, an impressive bi-monthly publication which reaches 300

influential scholars and scientists worldwide.

Modest numbers, to be sure; about as modest an outlook as the Apostles had in the first century. But, pointing to the work of such influential scholars as biologists Dean Kenyon of San Francisco State University and Michael Behe of Lehigh, as well as the Polish geneticist Maciej Giertych, Fr. Becker sees the future of science moving away from evolution and towards creationism. Such scholars, he believes, are at the forefront of an emerging "new science" which will ultimately discard the nineteenth-century Darwinian assumption that three elements—matter, energy and time—exhaust reality. The science of the 21st century, predicts Fr. Becker, will include a fourth element : that of Intelligence, or God.

But why should Catholics preoccupy themselves with this scientific question? Because, notes Fr. Becker, the issue possesses profound religious significance, and not just for fundamentalists like William Jennings Bryan: "In my view, evolutionism is the central and animating principle for the heresy of Modernism which, despite the efforts of Pope Pius X, is widely pervasive in the Church today."

And the reason the Church has not been able to deal effectively with Modernism, he explains, is that she has bought into an "accommodationist theology." If material things can evolve, then so can morality, Catholic dogma and the meaning of Scripture. The end result of this slippery slope is clear to this foe of Modernism: "Ultimately, you end up with the Episcopal Church as it is today."

It is vital from the start to understand what precisely is meant by evolution, because things obviously do change in the sense that they *develop*— including Catholic doctrine itself. (The idea of the development of doctrine saw its classic explanation by John Henry Newman in the 1870's.) But the evolution to which Fr. Becker objects is what he calls "molecules-to-man" evolution. This is the notion that non-living chemicals rearrange themselves, purely by chance, into living cells.

"It's a well-established fact," says Fr. Becker, "that within a particular kind you get great variety, from Chihuahuas to Great Danes—but dogs never evolve into cats—or anything else.

"We are not animals—they are not our kissing cousins."

Yet Fr. Becker concedes that in Catholic science circles today, "theistic" evolution is the norm. And not just at the typical American Catholic university, but even at the Pontifical Academy of Science itself. And what to

make of Pope Pius XII's 1950 encyclical *Humani Generis*, where the Pope left open to Catholic scholars the freedom to explore the theory of evolution?

Remarks Fr. Becker: "I'm very grateful for Pius XII. A fair reading of *Humani Generis* yields only a tiny loophole which contemporary Catholic theistic-evolutionists have opened up to be as big as the Holland Tunnel. I think that's a distortion of the Pope's intention."

Fr. Becker believes we may be due for another encyclical on the topic:

"[*Humani Generis*] was written in 1950—before the discovery of DNA, and when the Piltdown Man hoax was still heavy evidence for evolution. The theory was at its apex and the Church was in a defensive position. I hope at the 50-year mark, whoever the pope is will come out with a really good, updated encyclical on the subject. And I would hope he would pay no attention whatever to the Pontifical Academy of Science."

This last remark is an acknowledgement that in the highest Church circles, a theistic-evolutionary way of thinking holds sway. Father Becker places the blame squarely on the shoulders of Mario Cuomo's favorite theologian, Teilhard de Chardin.

Becker himself understands Teilhard's lure: "He seemed like he was coming up with the great synthesis between science and religion, and I became a great enthusiast of his. It seemed to make sense in the context of *aggiornamento*." (Fr. Becker was ordained in 1966.) "This is obviously what 'updating' means."

But he backslid. "As time went on, a certain disillusionment with the modern Church set in."

And with this disillusionment, nagging doubts in Father's mind: "Teilhard never did anything to establish it, and I never heard anybody else do so, either. It's just something we all assumed."

Today, scientists have had to scale back many of their earlier assumptions and assertions. Take Neanderthal man. According to Fr. Becker, the current scientific orthodoxy is that Neanderthal man is actually not much different from us: "He might have had some arthritis—his bones were rickety and so forth—but basically if he put on a three-piece suit he could walk down Wall Street and do business."

Despite such developments, educators and the popular media cling to outdated Darwinian ideas. The evolutionists are still in control of defining what is 'science,' automatically excluding anything which touches on the supernatural. Yet Fr. Becker has no hesitation in placing creationism squarely within the scientific realm, rather than the metaphysical. "Intelligence," he insists, "falls within the purview of science."

As proof he points to the field of microbiology and the science of the DNA code. Coded information must come from an intelligent cause. The fact that we can't observe the cause, just as we can't see an electron, should not prevent a scientific mind from working back to the cause by observing the effects.

Fr. Becker explains: "Even Carl Sagan takes the same approach with life in outer space: if we ever get coded messages from outer space that will be proof positive that there is intelligence out there. I would suggest to Carl Sagan that he turn his microscope onto DNA to get the same kind of coded message—the sign that intelligence is there."

All this does not, maintains Becker, hold creationists to a literalist reading of Genesis. For instance, he deliberately avoids the time issue—how long the earth has been in existence—as being the "big unsolved mystery." At present, he sees evidence on both sides such that a definitive answer is not now possible.

But while we shouldn't revert to a simplistic reading of Genesis, Fr. Becker can't abide the pervasive defensiveness among today's Catholics. "Our Faith and 2000 years of tradition give us the true story of our origin, and the evolution tale is really the myth and the fable."

Father Becker considers it critically important for the Church to distance itself from evolutionism. If not, he fears history repeating itself. In past centuries Christian theology became committed to the pseudo-science of the Ptolemaic system; it's vital that the Church repudiate its 20th-century equivalent.

"We're making the same mistake all over again, only it's a different Galileo," he warns.

It's a mistake Chesterton saw through 70 years ago in *The Everlasting Man*:

It is the simple truth that man does differ from the brutes in kind and not in degree; and the proof of it is here: that it sounds like a truism to say that the most primitive man drew a picture of a monkey and that it sounds like a joke to say that the most intelligent monkey drew a picture of a man.

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The author is a teacher versed in both science and theology who has reached the dual conclusion that evolution theory is bad science and incompatible with creation theology. In his recent book *Création et Rédemption*, from which this translated extract is taken, he explains why it is a misplaced notion to invoke divine causality to justify holding an evolutionary position. He presents good evidence showing Creation and Evolution to be scientifically and theologically antithetical. In the opinion of the translator: "It's almost as if Fr. Pierre Teilhard de Chardin had come back to repair the damage he did". It is a work, in short, that should have far-reaching effects.

Création et Rédemption

Theistic Evolution and the Christian Faith

FR. ANDRÉ BOULET

Aspects of the Problem

THEISTIC transformism maintains, within an overall evolutionist schema, the role of a divine Causality: the Creator God is the one who guides Evolution. The immense movement spread through time and space represented by Evolution, inducing higher and higher orders of nature in the scale of being would be produced by the all-powerful motion of the first Cause. As Creator of matter, God can make all living forms appear successively according to an order determined by the laws of nature, but when it comes to man he intervenes by a direct creative act. In the continuity of the evolutionary process, the creation of the spiritual soul introduces a radical discontinuity. Having allowed for this, the evolutionist theory can be accommodated without difficulty. This way of creating would correspond even more to the divine Majesty, it would display his Glory to an even greater extent than an immediate creation or all living beings.

This hypothesis (leaving aside the absence of scientific support), which at first view seems satisfactory, and even attractive, must be examined carefully. It must be asked, whether by maintaining a direct intervention of God in the evolutionary process, the transformist theory can be accepted without the Christian faith suffering.

It has already been said that many Catholic authors and theologians accept this theory. Their analyses invariably take into account the scientific data without criticism. Their approach is especially directed towards distinguishing clearly between the question "how" - which concerns science, and that of "why" - which involves theology.... It is interesting to note that many of these authors explicitly invoke the thinking of Fr. Teilhard de Chardin.

In this context it is difficult not to see in a certain number of current theological works, a particularly pernicious idea inherited from the, at least, ambiguous reflections of Fr. Teilhard de Chardin. The idea, which is perfectly logical in terms of theistic evolution theory, requires that there would necessarily be disorder in the world as from the time of God's creation. The disorder would include suffering and death. Some go as far as saying there is a "weakness of God" involved in the fact of creating: the object called into existence by the creative act is necessarily marked by finitude, suffering and death.

As scandalous as this idea may be, it is perfectly coherent with the evolutionist postulates upon which is based the theology that considers it as fundamental. This point will be discussed at greater length in section II.

Due to the particularly noxious character of this idea which, it must be emphasised is a consequence of transformism, as will be shown later, the analysis will be pursued. It will be revealed that the adoption of the transformist thesis, even in its spiritualist form seems far from being indifferent to the Christian faith.

Transformism really appears to be the transposition of the "myth of progress" into the historical record of life, and thereby, in some way, to find its justification: "The evolutionist concept has invaded all fields of human knowledge by merging with the myth of progress" (Louis Bounoure "*Déterminisme et Finalité*").

Numerous authors have adopted this literary style of describing the slow ascent of life, which appeared on the earth by the interplay of physico-chemical forces, manifesting itself at first in rudimentary form, then progressively unfolding into

evermore complex forms up to man! Thus life ascended irresistibly from the inorganic to the organic, from the simple to the complex, from primitive 'gelatine' to man. This slow "ascension" is the equivalent of a "march forward" in which, with rather more imagination than science, one tried to see a progression (the word progress comes from the Latin "progressus" meaning "march forward").

The origin of the "myth of progress" is found in the Age of Enlightenment philosophy of the 18th century. The movement of the human mind towards knowledge was conceived as a "march forward", a "progress", a liberation, a promise of success and happiness. The Age of Enlightenment was convinced that an-increase of knowledge and power would suffice to improve mankind. Evil was identified with ignorance and acquisition of knowledge with human progress. The accumulation of scientific and technological knowledge must produce a qualitative mutation of the mind.

The principal thinkers of progress of the 19th century sought to read the law in the order of nature and life. Auguste Comte, for example, considered progress to be the display of order inscribed in things, that positivist science had the mission to decypher. For Bergson, it was the equivalent at the human level of what happens in the life force in general. It is understandable that in this climate of "mystical progress" the tranformist thesis blossomed quite naturally. Humanity seemed to have reached the threshold of a marvellous age, and a radiant future opened before it. This "golden age", that preceding generations had placed in the distant past, and of which all civilisations had a clouded memory, was "to come". It was projected into the future and provided a source of optimism that seems to us today somewhat utopian.

The spectacular development of scientific knowledge in the 20th century (doubling every 20 years) has aided this concept of progress: all questions and problems can be resolved by more science and technology. The idea of progress had become an ideology.

Progress becomes ideology

It can be seen that these concepts make progress a sort of historical or cosmic necessity. Time is considered as not only a time-scale, but also a scale of values. It measures whilst generating progress. Man's effort conjugated with the effects of

time, achieves a continual development in a positive direction, from the less good to the better. The idea of change is itself charged with a positive signification. The very fact of change implies improvement. Everything must evolve, because evolution (in the general sense of the term) guarantees something better. The synthetic theory of evolution became the touchstone of this concept and its scientific guarantee to the extent that it provided the myth of progress with a foundation and an illustration in nature. Was not the law of progress "inscribed in things"?...In short, humanity would progress towards its wellbeing as surely as inert matter evolved towards living matter and intelligence.

Progress is in fact presented by the synthetic theory of Evolution as a growing complexification of living beings across geological time. In this regard, and as Michael Denton showed, the notion of complexification is contested by science and finds no objective support from scientific observation. In other words, biochemical complexity of a microbe is no less in a plant than in an animal. The simplest protozoa show great complexity, are perfectly adapted to their environment and capable of the most elaborate operations. The animal kingdom is characterised by having supplementary operations to those of the plant kingdom. But in itself, the nature of a plant or an animal is perfectly constituted. Why, therefore, must a living being perfectly adapted to its environment evolve? In view of what improvement? And in relation to what, can a being said to be more evolved than another? Is it better to be a fern than a seaweed, a giraffe than a turtle dove, a gorilla than a lemur, a viper than a pike-fish, an ox than a frog?

Perfections acquired by a living creature resulting from its different operations do not change its nature. A young stallion becoming a race-horse is still a horse, an eaglet learning to fly remains an eagle, and a child receiving education and culture maintains its human nature. The reasoning of transformism seems to be that all living things constitute one and the same living being which acquires new operations over time. Its nature would thus transform, passing from an inferior type to a superior one, with the ultimate stage being "hominisation". Not only is there an implicit amalgamation between the notion of individual and species, but there is a transposition to the ontological plane of characteristics which are only "accidental", i.e. only affecting certain secondary characters of a being whose nature is clearly determined. They may provoke apparent modifications of the

species over the course of time, without there being an imperceptible passage to a different species.

Is the language of the Bible deceiving?

In the evolutionist perspective, every living thing becomes entirely relative to the evolution project and dissolved within a grandiose movement of the whole, which encompasses it, uses it and supersedes it. But in these circumstances how can one continue to assert, as does the inspired author of the book of Genesis, that God positively wanted each being, each plant to be “according to its kind”, and each animal “according to its kind”, and that he wanted each according to its consistence, its truth and its own excellence. How can this be, if each thing is at the best no more than an intermediary on the way to perfection or, at the worst, the unfortunate victim of an unfavourable mutation? Can the Creator still tell us something of his Beauty, of his Wisdom, his Power, his Goodness and his Mystery against a background of inconsistent beings, the majority of which must disappear to leave place for others, themselves doomed to the same destiny in the name of the implacable law of Evolution? Could the language of the Bible deceive to this extent? Does it not invite us to praise the Creator for each of his creatures, each one being admired and contemplated for itself, each one inscribing itself in an admirable order where everything is made with “number, weights and measure”? If God’s plan was in fact to create by using Evolution, why is it that Holy Scripture has difficulty in lending itself to such an interpretation? After all, the idea of Evolution is ancient and would have been understood by the contemporaries of the writers of Genesis. How can it be explained that so many generations of Bible readers had been led into error on such an important subject as their origins? Is not the idea of Evolution easier to understand than Creation, closer to human reasoning and the “technological” experience of man, than that of ‘*ex nihilo*’ Creation?

Time in the Christian conception of history

It has been shown that the “myth of progress” inherent in the transformist theory corresponds to a linear vision of history, unfolding, as if guided by an intrinsic necessity and leading humanity towards a future “golden age”. Now, this is not the biblical vision of history which is characterised by its

discontinuity, and situates the "golden age" of Creation at the beginning. The mysterious period of original perfection conserved in the memory of all peoples was suddenly interrupted by the historical event of the "Fall", which brought about a series of degradations in the universe delivered up to the power of death. It is in relation to this Fall, this initial moral decline that any progress can be envisaged. Progress which consists essentially in an initiative of God to restore the lost friendship. Man's response is marked by inconsistency, fragility, sin and infidelity. But little by little the successive covenants restore in man the image of God. The Incarnation is situated "In the fullness of time" inaugurating the time of the "new Creation" in anticipation of the glorious return of Christ at the end of time. Then Creation will be re-established in its original perfection, and all the creatures will participate in the praise of God the Creator and Redeemer (*Rev. 5:13*). In the Christian view of history, time is not in itself a positive value. Time is ambivalent. There is a time of sin and of grace, a time of spiritual combat and of confrontation with the powers of darkness. If it acquires a positive value, it comes from a condition of grace. True progress of humanity can only be spoken of in a spiritual context, and without it being either a continuous and linear process or happening inevitably. The history of Salvation takes place in the human liberty of each person, and Christian Hope is of quite another nature than optimism of a progressist utopia. The return of Christ at the end of time (the "Parousia") is not the end of an evolutionist process, the natural termination of History, but the unfathomable decree of the Father's love. He will inaugurate the "renewal of all things" of which Jesus speaks in the Gospel.

Suffering death, and original perfection

Transformism postulates a process of continual improvement, from the most primitive life to the most evolved. The process necessitates 'ipso facto' the replacement of certain living things by others, and therefore disappearance or elimination of the former. Evolutionary filiation and the mechanism of natural selection necessarily imply suffering and death. Whichever way it is calculated, the amount of suffering and death that is the inevitable price of the evolutionary process proposed by transformism is formidable.

This simple but logical consequence of transformist postulates automatically gives rise to questions which injure the faith of

believers. If Evolution is really the way God chose to create, then the responsibility for the imperfections, sufferings and death inherent in the evolutionary process must be attributed to Him. They are part of his plan as a means of attaining an end. It is at this price that Creation develops, unfolds in time and can attain its final stage: "hominisation". Thus it is upon God Himself that the scandal falls!

Is it sufficient to say suffering and death only present a problem for the human species, that death and suffering are only a scandal where living creatures with immortal souls, creatures capable of loving, unique and irreplaceable, are concerned? However little one is sensitive to the disorder constituted by violence in the animal kingdom, and without projecting one's own sentiments on the animal world, or being over sensitive, such a reply seems far from satisfying. Must man be present for these realities to become a scandal? The suffering of animals, the law of death to which they are submitted in their struggle for existence, with some species being herbivores and others carnivores, even if less "scandalous" than the suffering and death of man, are a great blow to our admiration for the work of creation. It is not surprising that certain theologians, as already mentioned, are led to declare that since death has always been a natural occurrence, it has to be included in the Author of nature's specifications, and for nature to progress in the flux of life, it must engulf living things in death. Suffering and death are indeed the real objective data of nature in its present state. But in the evolutionist perspective, they are inherent in Creation, they are a necessity of the creator's plan and are indissociable from the divine choice of creating according to this method.

Could Divine Wisdom be at fault?

In such conditions, is it still possible to assert the perfection of the natural order according to divine Wisdom? There is an instinctive feeling that the disorders and struggles seen in nature ought not to exist in a Creation declared by God to be very good (*Gen. 1.31*). The perspective presented by evolutionary theory, however, hardly corresponds with that of the Bible. Death and suffering are absent from the Creation and original harmony described in Genesis. Several times the Bible states categorically that death was not made by God⁽¹⁾: "God did not make death,

(1) A logical consequence of this assertion would be that the 6 days of Creation were all prior to the "geological eras". If before the Fall death did not exist, no fossils would have been formed.

and he does not delight in the death of the living. For he created all things that they might exist, and the generative forces of the world are wholesome, and there is no destructive poison in them" (*Wis. 1:13*); "But through the devil's envy death entered the world" (*Wis. 2:24*); "Therefore as sin came into the world through one man and death through sin" (*Rom. 5:12 & 17*). It should be noted that the texts do not only concern the human species. According to Scripture, the state of suffering and violence found in Creation is not that wanted by God in the beginning. Faithful to the biblical text, Tradition has always asserted that suffering and death were the consequence of man's sin, and the repercussions have spread to nature in its entirety (cf. *Rom. 8:20-22*).

Is one not astonished at the catastrophic, or even disproportional, character, of the consequences that Original Sin had upon nature. In this context, the role of guardian of Creation assigned to man by God should be recalled. Also that the harmony of Creation could only be maintained if man remained under the submission of God. Today we are aware that man can be responsible for cataclysms, for destructions, for disruptions and that his actions can have consequences of terrible gravity. A tiny cause can upset an equilibrium and release disproportionate disturbances (for example, a single match in a forest).

In relation to these reflections, it should be recalled that in the beginning, according to Genesis, God gave all living creatures a vegetarian diet (*Gen. 1:29-30*), and that he did not permit meat as food until after the Flood (*Gen. 9:2-3*), and then only as a derogation of his original plan. Originally, therefore, there was no meat-eating species. It should be added, that many scientists have been astonished to find that the mechanisms in the living body are sufficient for it to last, and that it is the death of the organism which is abnormal in view of these mechanisms. Does not this observation recall the statement in the Book of Wisdom: "God did not make death, and he does not delight in the death of the living" (*Wis. 1:13*)? Death does not, therefore, result from an internal necessity, but from a defective functioning of the organs.

The consequences of transformism upon Christian anthropology will be returned to at greater length in section II. At this stage it should be observed that when the first man is placed in the series of animal fossils proposed as the ancestors of man, it is difficult to recognise in him the physical perfection

corresponding to the privileges with which God endowed him originally according to the teaching of the Church. The transformist hypothesis, claims that the first man was very close to animality, and that this brutish origin would indicate the source of our evil tendencies. The Church's teaching, however, is that after the Fall, man was diminished in both his body and soul. We are, therefore, faced here with two opposing viewpoints.

Conclusion

Is it surprising that a God unable to create without suffering and death, or worse still, wanting to use such a process of creating, is not the object of praise, thanks or love? How could his Wisdom and his Goodness be admired? How could such a Creator so ill-inspired in our eyes arouse other than fear, resentment, revolt, or at the best indifference along with strong disillusion. Does not the principle reason for the atheism or religious indifference of our contemporaries lie in the unacceptable idea of God conveyed by evolutionism; a God responsible for suffering and death, even though evolution is claimed to be compatible with the Christian faith? Certain enemies of the Church seem more lucid, in this regard, than many Christians, as is witnessed by the following anecdote. **When the Red Army occupied his diocese, a Chinese Bishop was surprised to see that it did not start with Marxist indoctrination. Rather, it introduced in the villages courses on Darwinism, which were considered to be much more effective.** This example should give room for reflection amongst many Christians tempted by a theory whose attractiveness is undeniable.

*[Translated from *Création et Rédemption*, October 1995, chapter 1, pp. 122-132]*

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Father Paul Crane SJ. 1910 - March 11th 1997.
Requiescat In Pace

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